

Library Services in the 21st Century for Sustainable National Development in Nigeria: An Overview

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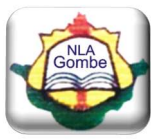
Abstract

This paper discussed library services in the 21st century towards sustainable national development. The transformation of national development socially, economically, politically, educationally and technologically enhances improvement in human dignity and the general well-being of its peoples. The libraries of the 21st century have devised various means of reaching the library users beyond the conventional means of library service delivery. The paper discussed the libraries services irrespective of public, special, national, academic, private or virtual. The library services highlighted in this paper are Reference and information service (RIS) Answering users questions, Circulation services, Current awareness service (CAS), Selective dissemination of information (SDI), Indexing and abstracting service, (IAS), Inter-library cooperation and network, Readership promotion (RP) and User education (UE), Internet services, Web tools services i.e. emails, video conferencing, Social media platforms and Cloud library service and also the importance of library services towards achieving sustainable national development. The paper concludes that libraries are key and essentials actors in the society and they play important role towards achieving sustainable national development through effective and functional services it rendered. The paper recommends that government should pay attention to libraries by providing more and adequate funds for smooth running of the libraries for sustainable national development in Nigeria.

Keywords: Library, Information resources, Library services, Sustainable development, Society, Digital technologies.

Introduction

It's an interesting state of affairs for one to study sustainable national development and libraries as entities which coming up with measurable roadmaps to guide and shape aspirations, conduct and to structure future perspectives. Libraries are recognizes as a centers of research and a place of information empowerment which cannot be over emphasized as the public benefit immensely from it services. Libraries are service organizations where individuals, organizations and societies can access substantial quantities of information. Information is important and key resources for every organization and it's an essential input for all types of individuals, publics, and community. Library is an excellent center of obtaining and accessing information from collection of books and other forms of records and resources organized and interpreted to meet the broad varying information needs of its users. These information resources are inform of books, journals, newspapers, magazines, reports, workshop and

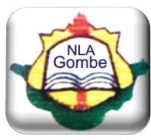


seminar papers, book of proceedings, DVDs, CDs, cassettes, videotapes, filmstrips, manuals, dictionaries, encyclopedias, directories, yearbook, gazetteers, handbooks, almanacs, maps and atlases. Library information services can be access online and offline. Others services can be subscribes through digital platforms as e-books, e-journals, e-directories, e-encyclopedias, EBSCO, EMERALD, AJOL, JSTOR, DOAJ, TEEAL, and HINARI among others to augment the print materials. Generally, libraries play a vital role in providing information to its community of users through systematic selection, acquisition, processing, preservation and dissemination of information using different format for effective library services. This ensure users access to current research that will impact their information need especially in teaching, learning, research activities that would promote national development (Abata-Ebire, Adetayo, & Ojokuku, 2018; Joell & Ayinla, 2015).

Globally, libraries are institutions of basic learning with the mission of providing collection of services to meet information needs of the academia and other individuals who may have need of their services Okebuihe (2011). Several authors regard libraries as the store of books and knowledge as well as the intellectual wealth of the world which serves as the working tool for satisfying man's curiosity (Amaechi, 2014; Obizue, E.C. and Obizue, 2016). In Africa, despites that provision of books, periodicals, internet and other materials are instrument of national development to advance learning research output, gaps still exist in area of poor funding and insufficient resource materials, inexperienced and inadequate work force, lack of public enlightenment towards the use of library resources and poor information literacy of community dwellers (Onyemечи, 2017).

In Nigeria, libraries are the most efficient vehicle for information services which can't be overemphasized as regards to overall sustainable national development in Nigeria. Study by Shah, (2012) described sustainable development as the process of transformation of a country's social, political, economic, educational, and cultural value towards improvement in general well-being of its peoples (citizens), as well as better quality of life for present and future generations. Sustainable national development is a mission aimed at making the world a better place to live. Nicholas & Perpetual (2015), describes sustainable national development as the overall change and improvement in any society as related to individual progress. It covers a wide range of interrelated issues in the areas of environmental, economic, social and political all within the limits of the world's natural resources to ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

Studies by Dubicki, (2013) and Priti & Jibril, (2018), libraries play a significant key role in contributing towards the improvement of national development through the provision of equitable quality education through a number of activities initiated by different libraries. Libraries now contribute towards sustainable national development especially in promoting universal literacy, media, information and digital literacy skills towards quality information service delivery. However, gaps still exists as library users lack the right skills to access quality information services that would promotes national development through research, innovation and critical thinking in helping the government and civil society to actualize the goals of national development. Although, several efforts has been put in place in Nigeria in the provision of information services that cut across education, agricultural, public health care, and commercial activities which are key to national development. The provision of information resources awareness projects, collaborating with governmental and non-governmental institutions to ensure sustainable access to information on education, public health and emergencies, agriculture, social issues and capacity building for national development has assisted the library to close the gaps in the effective service delivery (Obizue and Obizue,



2016). Moreover, libraries contribute immensely towards sustainable skills acquisition for universal literacy, promote good health, quality education, increase in production, and boost the economy of the country (Omeluzor, 2013). Literature reviewed identified some of the following library's services offered in the 21st century:-

Reference and Information Services (RIS)

National development and users efficacy of library services depends on functional reference and information services. This is a service known as answering users' enquiries. This service is the fundamental role in ensuring effective and efficient access and utilization of library and information resources through direct or indirect approach. It offer basic assistance to nurture educational growth and pursuits; these are areas of selecting information/ resources, providing specific information on demand, guidance and counseling and instruction on how to use the resources. It offers information services to various categories of users to promote reading, learning, and research activities (Philip, 2018). Reference services also involve online, the use of telephone conversion, video conference, email and online interaction and communication. (Fakandu & Saleh, 2015). Indeed libraries services are efficient vehicle for information services which can't be overemphasized as regards to overall sustainable national development in Nigeria. However, poor and obsolete reference services, poor enquiries and inadequate reference materials are some of the challenges confronting effective reference services for national development (Gama, 2015).

Circulation Services

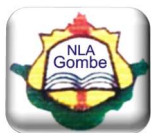
This is an important information services provided by libraries whereby users can interact with the library resources. Yaji, Ahmed & Jegbefume, (2019) list the services as follows:-

- 1) Registration of library users and issue out library borrowers cards to readers, this is usually practice in academic library, when using Browne Issue System.
- 2) Charging and discharging of books; given books charging and returning books discharging.
- 3) Send overdue notice to defaulters, borrowers who fail to return the books after the date due.
- 4) It has the duty to fine by pay some charges and keep charges records collected.
- 5) It responsible of taking and keeping statistics records of users for managerial purposes.
- 6) It's responsible for shelves reading, cross-checking and ensured corrected shelved.
- 7) It's responsible for operating automated filing and recovery system and digital technology.
- 8) It's responsible for assisting patrons at the circulation desk.
- 9) It's responsible for resolving issues related to misconduct of library users.

Current Awareness Service (CAS)

This is a service for alerting users on new publications acquired by the library. It's a service directed towards all users of the library services, these may include accession list (a list of recent acquisitions), bibliographies, literature surveys, table of contents of periodicals received in the library, current awareness bulletin, etc. Current awareness service is a source of information dissemination. For example current pages selected in Newspapers, Magazines, Periodicals, or Textbooks are produce via photocopy and sent to the users. It involves daily, weekly supplied information or within the period of one week. Indeed, library's current awareness of information services serve as a medium to overall achievement sustainable national development in all ramifications.

Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)



This is a personal information service provide or notifying library users about latest information on a specified topic or subject. It's the provision of scientific information to individuals or corporate users on predetermined subjects. It's a personalized service directed towards the individuals, homogeneous group and its subject coverage may be specific or broad, searches based on user's query (Oyedum, 2015). It's very important for sustaining the national development particularly in promoting public health care and emergencies, quality education and ensuring universal literacy. Uzohue & Yaya (2016) SDI are documented list on a specific topic/subject, it may be free of charges or commercial. It may be using local databases or external databases. Some of its features includes: It keep user abreast with latest developments in area of interest. It answer to specific user query. It saves user's time by speed and accuracy. It encourage the library patron to visit and use the new in the library resources. It's made selection of documents print/electronic easily.

Indexing and Abstracting Services (IAS)

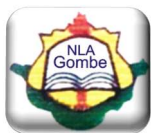
It's a service that provides access to information and knowledge. It's a process whereby recently published periodicals such as newspapers are bring together in a specific subject or discipline. While, an abstract are design to help readers to decide whether to read original document or not sometime a well prepared abstract serves as a substitute for the original document. Indexing is a systematic process of arranging of entries designed to enable information users to locate items in a document easily. Therefore, Indexing and abstracting services are essential tools that helps users to overcome language barrier, keep them abreast with current development in their subject fields, and solve their research problems if any. It's done or published in almost all the subject or discipline and now a days are available via machine readable form via CD-ROM products or online on the internets as databases. Some of these free databases are (PubMed), and for subscription are (chemical abstracts services etc). Moreover, most libraries select a specific subject for indexing and abstracting (Adetoro, 2017 and Dala & Ahmed, 2019).

Inter Library Cooperation and Networking

The terms "Library cooperation" and "Library networking" are often used interchangeable to describe formal and informal cooperation and partnership for resources sharing activities in libraries. These system of library cooperation is to systematically transmit information in versatile human and technical networks among them (libraries) in order to enhance knowledge, sharing of resources with the aid of digital technologies (Muhammad, 2014). Generally the system refers to information sharing or lending through computer and telecommunication links which transmit information or data from one library to another. The areas of cooperation include manpower, technical assistance, or information materials.

Readership Promotion (RP) and User Education (UE)

It's a process of training the library users (patrons) to be acquainted with the procedure of using the resources in the library so that they can access, retrieve and use information with little or minimum delay. Several programmes are organized by the libraries for their patrons in order to acquire the skills necessary for them to function in the 21st century these are: library orientation, formal instruction through course offered by general studies in higher education such as GSE Library studies, GNS Information science, Digital literacies skills etc. during these programmes library users are to learn rules and regulations governing operations and use of the library. These rules contain dos and don'ts, membership, loan of library materials, prohibition, vandalism, mutilation, theft and its effects, punishment for various offences etc (Yaji, Ahmed & Jegbefume, 2019). However, Users are also taught how to access, retrieve, store, evaluate,



use information, cross-referencing and cite bibliographies for proper referencing (Omeluzor, 2013).

Internet Services

Libraries with internet provides a wide range of current information services to various individual, people, community of users that may not likely be available in conventional libraries with books and journals. This is vital in satisfying the information needs of the library users, libraries with internet can search and download relevant information materials on topics of interest, such as on public health and emergencies, climate change, girls child education, drug abuse, security challenge and agricultural innovations. Libraries make their platforms or web sites and post their collections and others important information that will be useful to their readers. This help readers to access to such services that are not available in conventional library this would enable the citizen to be well informed about sustainable national development in Nigeria.

Social Media Platforms Services

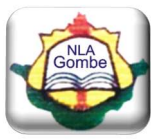
Social media creates virtual reality for libraries, a web manifestation of the library as a place, taking library service online through social media networks such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram, Messenger, Twitter, LinkedIn, Podcast, and Flicks etc, it provides creative ways in which libraries can offer effective information services to meet user's expectations. The social media tool require are computer, internet connectivity and a trained professional to manage the system via interactive, collaborative and dynamic technological space. The system allow libraries to interact, share, exchange ideas and deliver effective information service to their client, its provide users with a wide range of resources, collaboration, interactions, participation and sharing of ideas, views, opinions, information, facts and knowledge easily virtually (Awojobi, Adeyemi & Osisanwo, 2014). Hence, this services serves as a vehicle for sustaining national development more especially in managing environmental issues, agricultural, climate change, quality education, food security and public health and emergencies.

Web Tools Services: - Electronic mails (emails) and Video Conferencing

This is a services provided by the libraries with the aid of internet. It is a transmission and receiving of messages, information, data, files, letters and documents by means of computer based. However, email is regarded as the most successful approach towards sending, sharing, transfer and exchanging of information to numerous individuals despite the origin, culture, socio-economic or geographical location (Fakandu & Saleh, 2015). While video conferencing is a video based virtual reference information service. It has replaced traditional phone calls in many instances. It's cheaper than and almost as good as a face-to-face meeting. It was introduced to overcome the communications hitches inculcated in text based services. This mode of communication involves visual elements where the librarian and the user can both text and voice transactions, they can see and hear one another in the same manner as in face-to-face interaction. Presently, video conferencing is used to conduct viva voice examinations, interviews and virtual meeting system. Nearly any type of document, audio, video, animation, software and others can be stored and used for presentations (Dala & Ahmed, 2019). The readiness of web tools in a library enhances document service delivery, resource sharing thereby enhance sustainable national development especially in education and other business sector.

Cloud Library Services

This is a new trend services provided through web based technology, it serves on virtual platforms that generate large opportunities and virtual paths to use their service for the various



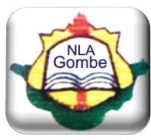
purposes. Cloud computing emerged as one of the most popular virtual technology for libraries to deliver their services effectively. It featured with different technologies such as speed internet connectivity, utility computing, grid computing, web 2.0, unified computing, service oriented architecture and so on. Cloud computing and libraries has generated a new model called cloud libraries some even refer it cloud computing. The need for cloud computing occur due to the following reasons; information explosion, problems of access to information, resource sharing, resource management, complex demand of users, save time of the users, and it's facilitate information sharing services over the internet. Rather, having these services on remote or local servers or on personal devices (Muhammad, Shuaibu & Sa'ad, 2018).

Roles of Library's Services towards Achieving Sustainable National Development

Several studies by (Ebiwolate 2017, and Bertsch & Warner-Soderholm, 2013) said that, effective library and information services in Nigeria can ensure sustainable national development and improve quality and better human living standard. This is because the library can handle virtually all the activities that can enhance the development of the people including:- preservation of cultural heritage, knowledge and histories of the past and tourist centre (artefacts, world book of records etc), promotion, collaboration and scholarship thereby sustaining readership, research, and publishing output, promotion, creation and publishing of digital content through electronic databases, digital commons, repositories, which can enhances sustainability of education, science, public health and environmental issues in any nation. And enhancing access to information and sharing of ideas, content through online system like digital library, online public catalogue, portals etc. However, libraries are key determinants for sustainable national developmental activities since it engages training citizens in various capacities to enable them become critical thinkers, problem solvers, lifelong learner and independent information seekers. Therefore, communities with quality and functional library information system have better quality education, health care, improved agriculture, poverty eradication and equality. Thus, lead to sustainable national development, in promoting peaceful coexistence among the people/citizens (Oyinloye., Tabawa, & Aku, 2017., Omeluzor & Ogo, 2018). Despite this roles certain issues on library services are lack of adequate professional skills, inadequate library funds, inadequate ICTs librarians, technophobia in using the internet service such as cloud computing, social media tools and web tool services, poor internet connectivity, expensive bandwidth, poor internet skills and digital competencies more especially with librarians in managing internet services and poor preservation skills, frequent incessant power outage and few computers (Okiki, and Ashiru, 2011, Raju, 2014, Echezona, Ibegbulem and Nwegbu, 2015).

Conclusion

Having provide details in the body of this work on the libraries services play a key determinant role in achieving sustainable national development in the society like Nigeria. It's very clear that libraries are agents to sustainable national development in social, political, economic, educational, and cultural value towards improvement in general well-being of citizens. Library services play a significant key role in contributing improvement of equitable quality and better living standard through a number of services provided some are; reference and information service (RIS) answering users questions, circulation services, current awareness service (CAS), selective dissemination of information (SDI), indexing and abstracting service, (IAS), inter-library cooperation and network, readership promotion (RP) and user education (UE), internet services, web tools services i.e. emails, video conferencing, social media platforms and cloud library service. These services are key to a survival of human and a better society in areas of community public health and emergencies, quality education, agricultural innovations, environmental issues like climate change, girls child education, drug abuse, and security



challenge etc. However, certain gaps exist in aspects of lack of adequate professional skills librarians, inadequate library funds, technophobia in using and managing internet services such as cloud computing, social media tools and web tool services, poor internet connectivity, expensive bandwidth, poor internet skills and digital competencies more especially with librarians in managing internet services and poor preservation skills, frequent incessant power outage and few computers

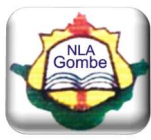
Recommendations

For effective library service delivery in the 21st century for sustainable national development the following recommendations were suggested for the study:

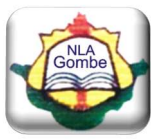
- i. Libraries in Nigeria should create awareness campaign project on availability of information resources in the library (both print, non-print and online databases) and serve as advocate of information literacy for national development.
- ii. There is need for functional library services that would drive the goals of national development to enhance learning and research output of the users.
- iii. Adequate funds should be provided constantly to manage and maintain the library resources and facilities like subscription of internet bandwidth, procurement of library materials since the libraries services play a key role in sustaining national development in social, political, economic, educational, cultural and technological.

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